

Oberg discloses a suspension assembly that utilizes plastic and steel pieces. Under one embodiment of Oberg, the plastic pieces are attached to the steel pieces using plastic stakes that extend from the plastic pieces through holes in the steel pieces. Heads are formed on the stakes by melting the plastic either using ultrasonic frequencies or heat. In a second embodiment, the steel is placed within a wall around the edge of the plastic and the wall is then melted over the edge of the steel. Oberg does not show or suggest applying the plastic material to the steel pieces using an adhesive.

Independent claim 1 is directed to a storage device with a suspension assembly that includes a metal material defining a portion of the suspension and a composite material having a higher stiffness to weight ratio than the metal material. The composite material is bonded to the metal material by an adhesive.

Like claim 1, independent claims 13 and 21 include limitations to bonding a composite material to a portion of a suspension assembly using an adhesive.

The combination of Pal and Oberg does not show or suggest the invention of claims 1, 13 or 21 because together these references do not suggest adhesively applying a composite material to a metal material on a suspension.

In Pal, the stiffening metal piece 36 is not applied to the load beam with an adhesive. Instead, Pal teaches that a thick viscoelastic material needs to be inserted between piece 36 and load beam 24 to absorb vibrational energy. Thus, Pal does not show or suggest applying any type of stiffening member to a load beam using an adhesive but instead only suggests applying a stiffening member to a damping material.

Similarly, Oberg does not show or suggest adhesively applying a composite material to a metal material but instead shows that the composite material should be connected to the

metal material using heat staking. Note that if adhesively applying a composite material to a metal material on a suspension was obvious, Oberg probably would have suggested it as one technique for connecting the two pieces. Instead, Oberg describes a technique that requires the melting of the composite material at selected points.

Since neither reference shows adhesively applying a stiffening member to a metal piece of a suspension, their combination does not show or suggest the invention of claims 1, 13 and 21 or claims 2, 6, 7, 15, 16, 23 and 24, which depend therefrom.

In light of the comments above, claims 1, 2, 6, 7, 13, 15, 16, 21, 23 and 24 are patentable over the combination of Pal and Oberg. Reconsideration and allowance of the claims is respectfully requested.

The Director is authorized to charge any fee deficiency required by this paper or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 23-1123.

Respectfully submitted,

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